THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

Public Information Department, 11150 East Blvd., Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216/421-7340

PRESS RELEASE

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LEON BORENSZTEIN: PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHER
Through May 3

Fifteen black-and-white portraits by California photographer Leon Borensztein are on view in Gallery D at The Cleveland Museum of Art through May 3. The photographs, on loan from the Fraenkel Gallery, San Francisco, were selected by Curator of Contemporary Art Tom Hinson.

Taken since 1980, the portraits are straightforward, unromanticized views of Americans from all walks of life. Borensztein attempts to show how external pressures--technological developments, political and economic forces, advertising--mold the lives of families and individuals in American society.

Born in Poland in 1947, Borensztein immigrated to the United States in 1978. To support himself while attending graduate school at the San Francisco Art Institute, he took a job as a door-to-door color portrait photographer. This gave him an opportunity to take his own black-and-white photographs of families within their homes, providing powerful and sometimes unsettling glimpses into the sitters' lives. The poses and clothing are determined by Borensztein's subjects, and his photographs reflect their views of themselves and the image they wish to project.

Borensztein still works as a commercial photographer, taking color portraits with one camera while using an identical camera loaded with black-and-white film for his creative work. His more recent portraits were taken in temporary studios set up in rented storefronts or hotel rooms.

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For additional information or black-and-white photographs, please contact the Public Information Office, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 11150 East Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216/421-7340.